THE IMPACT OF COLOURS ON PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF AN INDIVDIUAL

Dissertation submitted for the
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Registration No: 230030020822

Dissertation Title: The Impact of Colours on Psychological Aspects of an Individual

Co-Guide's Signature with Date Guide's

Guide's Signature with Date

DECLARATION BY THE STUDENT

I hereby declare that the work which is being presented in this dissertation entitled "The Impact of Colours on Psychological Aspects of an Individual" in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Bachelors/Masters/Ph.D of Fine Arts in Applied is an authentic record of my own work carried out during the period from February 2025 to April 2025 under the supervision of Mr. Anujeet Chatterjee Department of Fine Art and Applied.

I acknowledge that I have read and understood the UGC regulations, 2018 (*Promotion of Academic integrity and Prevention of Plagiarism in Higher Educational Institutions*). I confirm that this dissertation has been checked for plagiarism using the plagiarism checking software www.duplichecker.com. At the end of the dissertation, a copy of the summary report demonstrating similarities in content and its potential source (if any), generated online using plagiarism checking software is enclosed. I herewith confirm that the dissertation has been less than 10% similarity according to the plagiarism checking software's report and meets the UGC Regulations as well as plagiarism rules of Sister Nivedita University. I further declare that no portion of the dissertation or its data will be published without the Institute's or supervisor's permission. I have not previously applied for any other degree or award using the topics and findings described in my dissertations.

(Signature of the students with Date)

Name of the Student: Poulomi Sengupta
Registration no.: 230030020822
Department of Fine Arts and Design

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my Supervisor Anujeet Chatterjee, my guide and mentor, for their invaluable support, patience, and encouragement throughout the course of this research.

I extend my thanks to the psychologist Ms. Anindita Mukherjee who generously agreed to be interviewed for this study. Their professional perspective and thoughtful responses have added meaningful depth and authenticity to my research.

Last but not the least, I would like to acknowledge the efforts of researchers and scholars whose work I have cited, as their work formed the backbone of my study and provided a strong foundation for my analysis.

PREFACE

Colors play a significant role in shaping an individual's psychological state, noticing our emotions, behavior and our physical well-being. This dissertation investigates 'the impact of colors on psychological aspects of an individual'. Through a mixed method that includes both qualitative interviews and quantitative research. This research aims to find out the patterns in how the individuals respond to specific colors in different contexts and the misconception and misinterpretation about color psychology and ideas, such as racism, sexism, and stereotyping. Our emotional reactions and how we view certain colors can immediately change our mood and behavior. Different colors excite different emotional responses. White is the color of innocence, peace, black is for evil or death, grey is for regret or shame, red for love as well as anger. Warm colors tend to stimulate alertness and energy while the cool color blue promotes sincerity, calmness, concentration and hope. Whereas green and yellow on mood, attention and memory. Colors are very much responsible for emotional and mental health, so it is very much responsible for the atmosphere of the home. It can be highly responsible for irritation, depression, boredom, and also happiness, disgust, and celebration as well. It's often used in marketing and advertising, interior designing and mental health therapy through colors. Speaking about colors, colors are such a wonderful thing we have around us, but it also questions the stereotypical mindset of our society. Do we still abide by this color rule in our society? Does pink for girls and blue for boys still exist? Yes, the implications have changed over the years. A color cannot prove an identity of a gender. It's a misinterpretation of an idea. For that we constantly impose our ideas over the years. Everything is connected to our mind, whether it is about comparing cloth colors or skin colors. Our mind is race agnostic until society teaches us that not all skin colors are equal. The color of our skins are indeed determined by the sun. I'm not talking about getting tanned. Nature is wise, human skin has

adapted over centuries as our early ancestors migrated across our planet. I think, future research could further examine the cultural and personal factors that conciliate individual responses to color stimuli. For instance, do people's favorite colors tell us anything about their personality? Are there universal favorite colors? Are there gender differences in how people experience or describe colors? Also, how does color affect human cognition and emotions? etc.

Keywords**:** Color psychology, emotions, cognition, mood, behavior, environmental design.

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INTRODUCTION

Color psychology explores the idea that different colors evoke distinct emotional responses.

For example, the color red is often used to create a sense of urgency and excitement, while blue is frequently used to convey trust and reliability. It can be used to create effective branding strategies, from marketing and design to therapeutic settings and can connect with their target audience on an emotional level.

Across various cultures, the idea that colors can influence mood, behavior and even cognition has led to growing interest in the psychological impact of colors. As personal experience, an individual can change or shape a culture or any situation by how they respond to a particular color.

This dissertation seeks to investigate the relationship between color and emotion thereby studying its psychological effects on individuals; the study employs both qualitative and quantitative methods to assess how different colors affect participants in varied settings.

CHAPTER 1: THE LINK BETWEEN COLOR AND EMOTIONS

This conversation delves into the debate over whether color-emotion associations are inborn or learned. Dr. Jonauskaite in the “Speaking of Psychology” podcast with Kim Mills emphasizes that while certain color emotion associations appear to be universal such as red with anger and love, and blue with sadness these associations are significantly influenced by cultural context. For instance, in China, people view red as the colour of prosperity and blessings, while in Western culture, it is considered as the colour of danger. All of this depends on the mindset of people and their viewpoints. These variations suggest that while some associations may be widespread, cultural factors play a crucial role in shaping our emotional responses to colors.

Dr. Jonauskaite counsels more studies and utilizes virtual reality to better understand how colors influence emotions in real life. These are also related to design, marketing, and mental health by understanding how color affects human behavior and emotional stability.

Dr. Jonauskaite says that people who are blind from birth can highly develop color-emotion associations, these connections are not totally dependent on visual experiences and also influenced by language and cultural symbolism. This suggests that while there may be some innate predispositions, much of our emotional response to color is learned through cultural and linguistic exposure.

These podcasts also point out some misconceptions and misinterpretations of psychological effects of colors. Likes and dislikes about color are different but when it comes to therapy, we think twice. Some scientists uncovered evidence suggesting that certain colors have therapeutic effects and symbolize particular emotional responses. They thought that painting a cell for the

prisoners could reduce their anger, depression, and regulate their stress levels, and it would show in their behavior. Implying the fact that the longer they spend in the cell, the less aggressive they become over time.

In 2015, Genschow and colleagues reran the study using modern methods in psychological science, they found absolutely no difference between the white and pink rooms for prisoners who are causing aggressiveness, it is not reducing any anxiety or stress. It is a truth that we are all confused about until this very day.

Dr. Jonauskaite said from her research, that the study found that- While, it comes to universal patterns in color emotion associations, everything is shaped by linguistic and geographic closeness. A large-scale survey researched across 30 countries with over 4,500 participants.

Neighboring countries and people who are speaking similar languages always have similar color choices and emotions. The complex which shows interplay between universal human experiences and cultural selectivity in our emotional response to colors.

These conversations made me and I hope made people reflect our own experiences in a totally new way. What really stuck with me from the podcast was when Dr. Jonauskaite made it clear that some color emotion links are learned through cultures. For instance red always felt urgent to me, maybe because of the stop sign, emergency and caution signs. Also it’s a blessing and joyful color for some people. Somewhere, we all pay attention to how colors affect our day by day mood. Colors are quiet emotional language, even if we don’t realize it.

Emotion Colour Wheel by Lindsay, 2022 - www.lindsaybraman.com

CHAPTER 2: THE COLOR THERAPY

In this article, Color Therapy also known as Chromotherapy. Our understanding of color and psychology come together to create a field called color therapy. Color therapy, also known as chromotherapy, is based on the idea that every color on the visible light spectrum has a unique wavelength and vibration.

By understanding the specific area of this article written by Stephanie Nicola and reviewed by Dr. Smitha Bhandari, MD explained that Chromotherapy is introduced as an alternative or complementary healing practice that uses color and light to influence a person's physical, emotional and mental well-being.

Color therapy is based on the belief that different colors correspond to specific energies or vibrations and can be used to restore balance in the body and mind. Actually chromotherapy is deeply rooted back to ancient healing systems in Egypt, Indian Ayurveda and China.

Colors are aligned with the elements present in our body, and the energies centered with the chakras.

I think, in today's day, chromotherapy is mostly offered in spas, meditation or yoga classes and healing classes, to experience calmness and remain stress free through our body and mind.

As Dr. Smitha Bhandari, MD, she reviewed that many individuals shared their benefits, as they felt peace under soothing lights and more energized towards a bright light room.

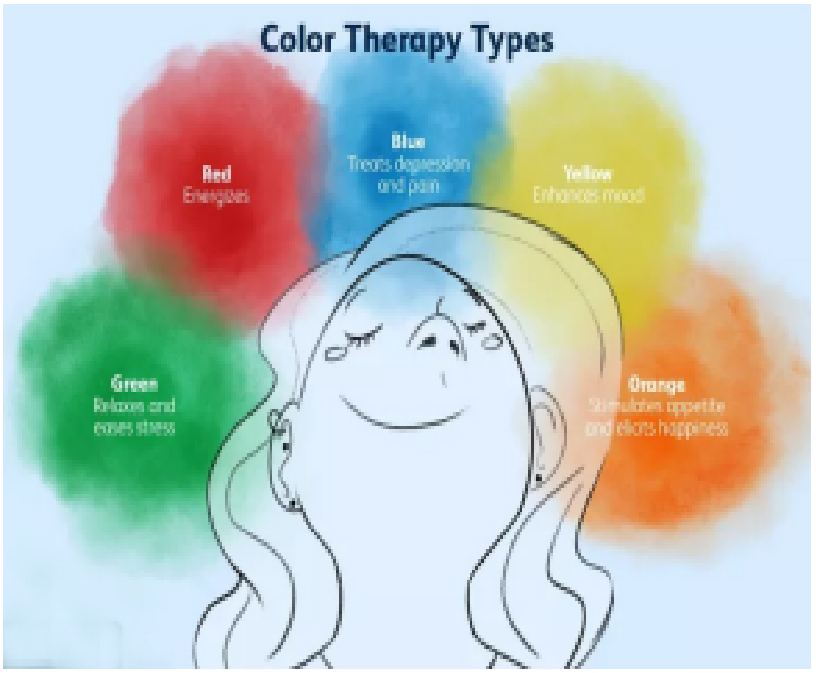
Color therapy sounds very soothing as it refreshes the mind and helps many people to cope up from anxiety and gives them a healthy life. But as research has shown, there is very little medical evidence that color therapy can be fully curable for mental and physical illness.

But, I think, we still have emotional responses to certain colors. Different colors affect us in ways. What I understand is that color therapy is soothing, can make you energetic and calm at the type. It is great but if someone suffers from extreme mental health issue, in that case color therapy will be very helpful for them, but it will not last really long. A single color therapy cannot be the only choice to do a proper treatment for someone's mental health.

So, chromotherapy might serve as a supplement for people but for a very short time, it can't replace any other strong therapy or medicines.

Chromotherapy represents an interesting intersection of ancient tradition and modern wellness trends. It is good for enhancing or boosting the mood of an individual and making them relax, but it will remain like this, calming, so relaxing that it can make people asleep too.

It is a holistic tool rather than a single treatment technique.



Toketenu Ohwovoriole, January 12, 2024, Medically Reviewed by Steven Gan, MD

CHAPTER 3: THE PSYCHOLOGY OF COLORS IN INTERIOR DESIGN

Angela Wright, a color psychologist who developed a system called the color effect system, which shows how different colors affect our emotions and behavior. Her approach is both creative and scientific making it suitable and applicable in real world interior design practices.

She believes that we just don't see colors, it is an emotion and we are deeply connected to it.

Our behavior, likes, dislikes, our energy, mood to creativity everything is linked to colors.

This principle is foundational in interior design, where color choices influence how comfortable,

Energized, relaxed, and focused people feel in a space.

Angela Wright's color affect system is built on two major ideas:

1. Color influences emotion and behavior

2. The psychological impact of color is affected by the personality environment.

Wright's system integrates human behaviours, neuroscience and perception to understand how colour choices affect people psychologically. She explained that colours can be grouped into four colour harmonies and each harmony

corresponds to a certain personality type and emotional tone. The success of a colour scheme in interior design, according to her theory, depends not only on the colours themselves but also on the consistency within one colour family or harmony.

For example, red can make you feel energetic and alert, while blur has a calming effect. Green is very balancing restful and has a freshness and yellow tends to uplift and energize, though too much can be overstimulating. Wright emphasizes that each colour should be used intentionally depending on the purpose of the room like calming blues in a bedroom or energizing touches of red or orange in a dining area. She also points out that people respond to colours differently based on their personalities, so the best interior colour choices match both the function of the room and the character of the people using it. Her work helps designers create spaces that aren't just stylish, but also psychologically comfortable and emotionally supportive.

Spaces by Kelly Interior Design, June 14, 2024

LITERATURE REVIEW

Color plays a significant role in cognitive processes such as attention, memory and creativity. For example, Mehta and Zhu (2009) demonstrated that red enhances performance on tasks requiring attention to detail, while blue boosts creativity and abstract thinking. One of the most widely accepted theories in color psychology is the arousal theory, which posits that certain colors can stimulate or relax the observer. Valdez and Mehrabian (1994) found that warm colors such as red, orange and yellow are associated with high arousal and emotional intensity, whereas cool colors like blue and green tend to promote calmness and relaxation.

In race, color symbolism and its psychological impact often reflect the historical and cultural power dynamics. For example black and white used as metaphors for evil and purity are not simply aesthetic associations, but are deeply rooted in colonial and racialized ideologies (Dyer, 1997). Research shows that darker skin tones are often unconsciously associated with aggression or criminality, while lighter tones are linked to innocence and virtue (Eberhardt et al, 2004).

Sexism also interacts with color in symbolic and psychological ways. Such as pink for women and blue for men may seem negligible but carry significant psychological implications. According to Kocher and Emery (2015), these associations begin early in childhood and contribute to internalized gender roles.

The pervasive nature of colorism and its intersection with sexism and racism has significant implications for mental health. Individuals facing such discrimination may experience anxiety, depression and a diminished sense of belonging. The internalization of these biases can lead to

long-term psychological effects, necessitating interventions that address these societal issues at their core. (Aggarwal, 2020).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants in this study included one qualified clinical psychologist (RCI registered) and several secondary data sources. The primary data gathered through a personal interview conducted with a psychologist practicing in India, Kolkata and also a professor in university. She is associated with mental health service for many years. The interview was designed to gain what experts view into the psychological influence of colors on individuals, especially in the context of gender, race, behavior, well- being and therapeutic methods.

Secondary data consisted of published reviewed articles, existential studies and from academic databases such as ResearchGate and journals. These sources provided from the existing findings which are related to color representation, sexism and racism in color perception and the role of color in design and therapy.

Material

The primary source used for data collection through an interview

1. Emotional response to colors
2. Cultural and societal associations of specific colors with race and gender
3. Psychological mechanism behind color therapy
4. The influence of color choices in interior designing

The interview was audio recorded (with the participant's consent) and later transcribed by analysis. Secondary sources were documented and managed by citation tools.

Procedure

The interview with the psychologist was conducted in person at the university. It lasted approximately 25 minutes and was audio recorded for the transcription and accuracy.

A literature review was conducted to support the findings of the primary interview. Sources were selected based on their relevance to the themes of color psychology, emotional and behavioral response to colors, sociocultural implications of colors and color applications in therapy and design.

Research Design and Data Analysis

The primary data from the interview was analyzed to understand the patterns, categories and meanings.

The secondary literature was analyzed through cities to integrate and compare multiple viewpoints and findings related to color psychology and its sociocultural dimensions.

The study was used for a qualitative research design.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

Title of the study: The impact of colors on the psychological aspects of an individual.

Researcher: Poulomi Sengupta

Institution: Sister Nivedita University

Date: 7.4.2025

Participant: Ms. Anindita Mukherjee, Consultant Clinical Psychologist (RCI registered)

Interview format: Semi-structured

Estimate duration: 20 minutes

SECTION 1: Demographic Information

1. Name: Ms. Anindita Mukherjee

2. Gender: Female

3. Occupation: Assistant Professor And Clinical Psychologist

4. How familiar are you with the concept of color psychology?

Ans: Yes, I have a lot of ideas about color psychology, and what its impact on human well-being is.

I have a brief idea about it.

SECTION 2: Perception of the psychology of colors

5. Do you believe that the color red always signifies danger or warning?

Yes, it is true for common people because red is a high-wavelength color so all of them mainly grab the attention. If red signal is there, and from the childhood also we are taught that red means to stop and green means to move, also out means red too. Apart from that for me, red is also a color of love.

6. In your opinion, does the color blue always make people feel calm or relaxed?

Yes, blue is a cold color so it does make a person feel calm and relaxed in a stressful situation, so we can associate with the sea and the sky to feel happy.

7. Do you think that the color green is universally associated with growth or prosperity?

Yes, not only growth and prosperity, it's a signal as I already taught about the red one, green means go for it. It's an easy-going signal too.

SECTION 3. Common Misconceptions

8. Do you think that all people respond to colors in the same way, regardless of cultural or personal differences?

   Cultural personal differences does impact their preferences for colors and also psychology, so personality profile is very important, intelligence and the societal context is also very important.

9. Most people think that black is a negative color. Do you believe that the color black is always linked to negative emotions or concepts of mourning, evil?

   Greyscale somewhere gives you darkness like blue feeling and per psychological norms- it is associated with sadness or negativity, but now-a-days I can see practicing art therapy. Many of them use black color, mentioning it is a bright one. It is an energetic color too. It is related to inner strength, like if a person is very determined and their strength is high then there are no obstacles with the color black.

SECTION 4. Colors used in Marketing and Design

10. Do you think that the use of color in logos and advertising has a universal effect on consumer behavior?

Red and yellow are very catchy colors that attract more customers. The colors which are very bright always stay in the minds and hearts of people, and they will use these colors more often than others.

11, Do you believe that color choice in branding can influence consumer trust and perception of a company?

As I already discussed, color choice is very important, which color you choose, whether it's black/white because the formation of determination starts with black and white and these colors can be used for proper market development.

SECTION 5. Gender Stereotypes and Color

12 How do you feel when someone goes against traditional color norms?

Different people have different perspectives, in today's date this has become normal if they want they can and everyone should be free about this concept.

13. Do you believe that color choices in children's toys contribute to sexism?

Yes, there it's started, when people first go to see a baby after birth, they congratulate their parents with blue balloons or darker color clothes for boys and something lighter color for girls, or like gender reveal which is very common out of India. So, also from there the concept came that boys and girls are very different and their choices too.

SECTION 6. The final thought

14. Do you think color psychology is an effective tool for improving personal well-being or productivity?

Color psychology is the main aspect in research of many researchers to improve human mind and well-being, in color psychology we expose different colors to patients and ask to see the color by closing their eyes which gives a calming effect in the mind. Those who are in a manic state, they extremely like bright colors, so we show them light colors.

15. How does it affect the human mind?

We have two parts of the brain, right and left hemisphere, one is for thinking and problem solving and the other is for creativity, one emotion making and one decision making. So when

we stimulate where color sensation is happening, it activates the emotional part of our brain, and then we feel satisfied.

CONCLUSION

This study has explored the comprehensive impact of colors on the psychological well-being of individuals, focusing specifically on the intersection of color with issues of sexism, racism, therapeutic practices and environmental design. Through the analysis of scholarly literature and a personal interview with a practicing psychologist, the research highlighted how color influences emotional states and social perceptions in both subtle and overt ways**.**

The interview questionnaire consisted of Demographic information, Perception of the psychology of color, Common Misconceptions, Color used in Marketing and Design, Gender Stereotypes and Colour, and Final Thoughts of the interviewee, Ms. Anindita Mukherjee.

Overall, this study affirms that color is far more than an aesthetic element; it is a powerful psychological and sociocultural tool. Whether used to heal, to discriminate, to inspire, or to oppress, colors carry meanings that deeply affect individuals' mental and emotional lives. As such, understanding the psychological aspects of color requires an interdisciplinary approach that considers therapy, design, and sociopolitical factors.

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Jonauskaite Domicile, PHD/ the link between color and emotion/American psychological association https://www,apa.org>color emotion.

The color therapy reviewed by Bhandari Smitha ,MD June 24,2024 , written by Stephanie Nicola: https: // slowlivingldn.com> journal/ the psychology of colors in Interior Design.

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Words	679
Characters	4418
Sentences	37
Paragraphs	13
Read Time	4 minute(s)
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Content Checked For Plagiarism

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CHAPTER 1: THE LINK BETWEEN COLOR AND EMOTIONS

This conversation delves into the debate over whether color-emotion associations are inborn or learned. Dr. Jonauskaite in the "Speaking of Psychology" podcast with Kim Mills emphasizes that while certain color emotion associations appear to be universal such as red with anger and love, and blue with sadness these associations are significantly influenced by cultural context. For instance, in China, people view red as the colour of prosperity and blessings, while in Western culture, it is considered as the colour of danger. All of this depends on the mindset of people and their viewpoints. These variations suggest that while some associations may be widespread, cultural factors play a crucial role in shaping our emotional responses to colors.
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Words	756
Characters	4676
Sentences	38
Paragraphs	36
Read Time	4 minute(s)
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Words	316
Characters	2185
Sentences	19
Paragraphs	18
Read Time	2 minute(s)
Speak Time	3 minute(s)

Content Checked For Plagiarism

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants in this study included one qualified clinical psychologist (RCI registered) and several secondary data sources. The primary data gathered through a personal interview conducted with a psychologist practicing in India, Kolkata and also a professor in university. She is associated with mental health service for many years. The interview was designed to gain what experts view into the psychological influence of colors on individuals, especially in the context of gender, race, behavior, well- being and therapeutic methods.

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The primary data from the interview was analyzed to understand the patterns, categories and meanings. The secondary literature was analyzed through cities to integrate and compare multiple viewpoints and findings related to color psychology and its sociocultural dimensions.

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Sentences	57
Paragraphs	66
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Speak Time	6 minute(s)

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INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

Title of the study: The impact of colors on the psychological aspects of an individual.
Researcher: Poulomi Sengupta
Institution: Sister Nivedita University
Date: 7.4.2025
Participant: Ms. Anindita Mukherjee, Consultant Clinical Psychologist (RCI registered)
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SECTION 2: Perception of the psychology of colors

5. Do you believe that the color red always signifies danger or warning?

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Words	160
Characters	1162
Sentences	7
Paragraphs	4
Read Time	1 minute(s)
Speak Time	2 minute(s)

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CONCLUSION

This study has explored the comprehensive impact of colors on the psychological well-being of individuals, focusing specifically on the intersection of color with issues of sexism, racism, therapeutic practices and environmental design. Through the analysis of scholarly literature and a personal interview with a practicing psychologist, the research highlighted how color influences emotional states and social perceptions in both subtle and overt ways.

The interview questionnaire consisted of Demographic information, Perception of the psychology of color, Common Misconceptions, Color used in Marketing and Design, Gender Stereotypes and Colour, and Final Thoughts of the interviewee, Ms. Anindita Mukherjee.

Overall, this study affirms that color is far more than an aesthetic element; it is a powerful psychological and sociocultural tool. Whether used to heal, to discriminate, to inspire, or to oppress, colors carry meanings that deeply affect individuals' mental and emotional lives. As such, understanding the psychological aspects of color requires an interdisciplinary approach that considers therapy, design, and sociopolitical factors.

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